

**REMARKS**

Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

**I.     Status of the Claims**

Claims 1-5, 9-12, 14-16, 19, 21 and 22 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Claims 23-26 are added without the introduction of new matter.

Claims 6, 13, 17 and 18 are amended without the introduction of new matter.

Claims 6-8, 13, 17, 18, 20 and 23-26 are pending.

**II.    Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112**

Claims 15 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as indefinite. That rejection is moot because claims 15 and 16 are canceled by the present response as noted above.

**III.    Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102/103**

Claims 1-5, 9-12, 17-19 and 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as anticipated by Osawa (U.S. Patent No. 6,699,122). That rejection of claims 1-5, 9-12, 19 and 21 are moot because those claims are canceled by the present response as noted above. Further, claims 6-8, 13-16 and 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Osawa in view of Todd (U.K. Patent No. GB 2 350 715). That rejection of claims 14-16 and 22 are moot because those claims are canceled by the present response as noted above. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections of

claims 6-8 and 13, 17, 18 and 20 based on Osawa and Todd, either taken individually or in combination.

Independent claim 6 is directed to a game system, and amended to clarify subject matter recited. Specifically, amended claim 6 recites features, among others, that:

a shared display module comprising  
a plurality of shared display regions arranged in a one-to-one correspondence with said display regions of said display modules of said game machines and displaying a position history of said predetermined symbol obtained based on said position information recorded by said game machines on said shared display regions corresponding to said display regions at which said predetermined symbol was statically displayed,  
wherein said game machines and said shared display module are connected by way of network communications.

Because the shared display module is connected with each of the game machines by way of network communications, each of the position histories of the predetermined symbol recorded at each of the game machines, respectively, is sent to the shared display module. The shared display module accumulates the position histories sent by the game machines to have an accumulated position history. Then, the shared display module displays in the shared display regions the predetermined symbol in accordance with the accumulated position history. A prize is awarded to the last player among the players of the game machines, who completes a feature game that is given based on the accumulated position history of the predetermined symbol and displayed at the shared display module. *See*, for example, the Specification, page 5, line 24 to page 6, line 15, page 23, line 12 to page 24, line 8, and Fig. 12.

Accordingly, each of the players of the game machines shares his or her position history of the predetermined symbol with other players, and has an opportunity to participate in one feature game together with other players.

The Examiner recognizes that Osawa does not teach a plurality of game machines and a shared display module comprising a plurality of display regions. Then, the Examiner combines Todd with Osawa to supplement the deficiency of Osawa to reject claim 6.

However, as described at page 2, lines 19-21 in Todd, the object of invention in Todd is “to provide a multi-machine games system which has a player-appealing common display but which does not require operational interdependency of the machines.” Further, Todd describes that the “games features of the machines operate independently of each other[,]”<sup>1</sup> and that “the system can give the impression of being a ‘linked jackpot’ system without having any such linking between the machines.”<sup>2</sup> Moreover, Todd describes as follows.

In the event that the games feature is selected for two or more machines simultaneously the arrangement is preferably such that only one of the machines produces the indication on the common display device, and the second machine may only produce the indication on the aforesaid local display device.

Accordingly, the common display device may incorporate an appropriate control to block operation by any other than the first machine.<sup>3</sup>

Accordingly, Todd merely teaches that each machine has the box structure 17 that displays the games feature independently from other machines, and that the display unit 20 is connected to the box structures of the machines to merely enlarge an image display of the box structure 17 of a machine selected from the machines. There is no network communications between the display unit

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<sup>1</sup> See Todd at page 3, lines 5 and 6.

<sup>2</sup> See Todd at page 3, lines 10 and 11.

20 and the machines to provide all of the players with an opportunity to participate in one feature game displayed at the display unit 20. Thus, Todd fails to teach that the game machines and the shared display module are connected by way of network communications, as recited in amended claim 6.

Additionally, because Todd describes that the games features of the machines operate independently of each other, and that, in the event that the games feature is selected for two or more machines simultaneously, the arrangement is preferably such that only one of the machines produces the indication on the common display device, Todd teaches away from the above-discussed features recited in amended claim 6.

Therefore, the present invention recited in amended claim 6 and claims dependent therefrom are patentably distinguishable over Osawa and Todd, either taken individually or in combination.

Independent claim 17 is amended to incorporate features substantially similar to previously presented claim 22. Thus, amended claim 17 now recites features substantially similar to amended claim 6 to the extent discussed above. Therefore, amended claim 17 and claims dependent therefrom are patentably distinguishable over the cited references, either taken individually or in combination.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests the withdrawal of the rejections of claims 6-8 and 13, 17, 18 and 20 based on Osawa and Todd.

New claim 23 dependent from claim 6 includes the following features.

a management device connected to said shared display module and each of said plurality of game machines, and configured to receive and record said position history of said predetermined symbol sent by

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<sup>3</sup> See Todd at page 5, lines 15-21.

each of said game machines through said network communications and to accumulate said position histories of said game machines to obtain an accumulated position history of said predetermined symbol, wherein

    said management device sends said accumulated position history to said shared display module, and

    said shared display module displays said predetermined symbol in accordance with said accumulated position history received from said management device.

Support for new claim 23 is found in, for example, the Specification at page 23, line 12 to page 24, line 8, and Fig. 12. Similar to the above discussions advanced for amended claim 6, the cited references, either taken individually or in combination, fail to teach or suggest the features recited in claim 23. Therefore, claim 23 is patentably distinguishable over the cited references, and allowable.

New claim 24 dependent from claim 17 includes features substantially similar to claim 23 to the extent discussed above. Similar to the above discussions advanced for amended claims 17 and claim 23, claim 24 is patentably distinguishable over the cited references, and allowable.

New independent claim 25 is directed to a game system and includes the following features.

    a management device connected to the shared display module and each of the plurality of game machines by way of network communications, and configured to receive and record the position history of the predetermined symbol sent by each of the game machines through the network communications and to accumulate the position histories of the game machines to obtain an accumulated position history of the predetermined symbol, wherein

        the management device sends the accumulated position history to the shared display module, and

        the shared display module displays the predetermined symbol in accordance with the accumulated position history received from the management device.

Similar to the above discussions advanced for amended claim 6, the cited references, either taken individually or in combination, fail to teach or suggest at least the above-noted features recited in claim 25. Therefore, claim 25 is patentably distinguishable over the cited references, and allowable.

New independent claim 26 is directed to a method for providing a game system, and includes features substantially similar to claim 25 to the extent discussed above. Therefore, claim 26 is patentably distinguishable over the cited references, and allowable.

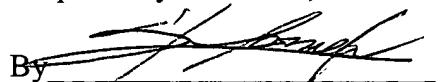
### CONCLUSION

In view of the above amendments, Applicant believes the pending application is in condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number indicated below once he has reviewed the proposed amendment if the Examiner believes any issue can be resolved through either a Supplemental Response or an Examiner's Amendment.

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Respectfully submitted,

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